MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF DATA RECOVERY EXCAVATIONS AT 38BK1900, BERKELEY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 384

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF DATA RECOVERY EXCAVATIONS AT 38BK1900, BERKELEY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Prepared By:
Michael Trinkley, Ph.D., RPA

Prepared For:
Mr. Walt Martin
Centex Homes
2430 Mall Drive, Suite 450
North Charleston, SC 29406

Chicora Research Contribution 384

Chicora Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 8664 ▪ 861 Arbutus Drive
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-8664
803-787-6910
www.chicora.org

This report is printed on permanent paper ∞

ABSTRACT

This document provides a brief overview of the data recovery project for archaeological site 38BK1900, situated in Goose Creek, Berkeley County, South Carolina. It was prepared to assist Centex Homes, the project sponsor, comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the regulations codified in 36CFR800 by allowing the State Historic Preservation Office to confirm that the various stipulations of the data recovery plan have been met.

The archaeological survey that identified 38BK1900 was completed in 2002, with a report prepared in 2003. The SHPO concurred with the recommendation that the site was eligible for inclusion on the National Register and a data recovery plan for the site was developed and approved by the client, Centex Homes, in March 2003. The SHPO approved this data recovery plan with modifications. At the same time a memorandum of agreement was prepared and approved by Centex Homes, the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Office of Coastal Resource Management (OCRM). Archaeological data recovery was conducted in late May and early April. Historic research was conducted at the same time and is still ongoing.

The field investigations opened eight 10-foot units in the four site areas. At the conclusion of these hand excavations a series of 10 mechanically stripped areas were opened to search for architectural remains. In addition, a detailed topographic map was prepared showing the location and details of two rice dikes in the project area.

The fieldwork identified several occupation areas, at least one with very dense artifacts, including architectural remains such as brick, mortar, and plaster. Other occupation areas exhibit variable amounts of Colono ware. The four site areas also exhibit artifacts ranging from the mid-eighteenth century through the early nineteenth century.

While the excavations did reveal several features, none produced ethnobotanical remains and appear to be depressions filled with yard debris. The mechanically stripped areas failed to reveal any features.

While this lack of features is disappointing, the data recovery plan did not focus on architectural reconstruction, but rather on the examination of the four site areas – a goal that has been achieved.

Historic research has been conducted by Sarah Fick and Michael Trinkley. A complete title search has been prepared and other primary resources have been explored for information concerning the eighteenth and early nineteenth century owners. We have not identified any significant primary resources (such as Mazyck family papers). The few surviving letters focus on other property and family affairs.

Another aspect of the historic research was the preparation of a context for eighteenth century rice cultivation. This has been achieved and a detailed overview of rice cultivation techniques, processing, economics/marketing, and effects on African American slaves has been completed.

A final component of the data recovery plan is the development of a educational component. This work is on-going. We have completed an examination of existing curricula materials involving rice and are collecting

resources to be included in the proposed curricula.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

In June 2002 Centex Homes retained Chicora Foundation to conduct a cultural resources survey of their proposed Liberty Hall development in the Goose Creek area of southwestern Berkeley County (Trinkley et al. 2003; Figure 1). The Goose Creek area is rapidly developing and the proposed 672-acre development would include single family homes with the entrance to the new community off what is today known as Liberty Hall Road (S-529).

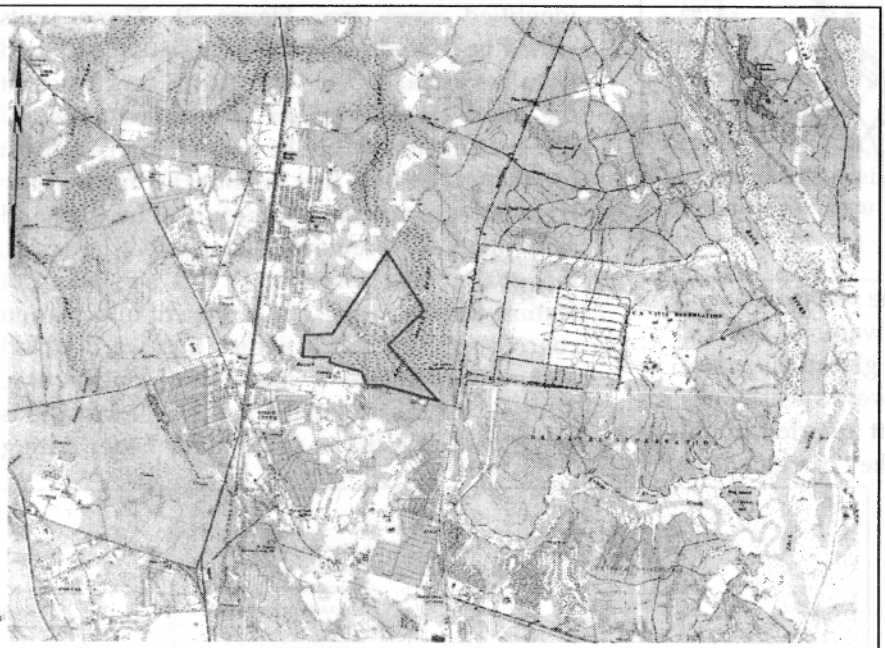

Figure 1. Vicinity of Liberty Hall survey tract in the Goose Creek area of Berkeley County (scale is 1" = 1.5 mi.).

As a result of that study a relatively small eighteenth century plantation, designated 38BK1900, was identified on the southern edge of their property, bordering Liberty Hall Road (Figures 2 and 3). Initially a series of 130 shovel tests were excavated across the 4-acre site (measuring 775 feet east-west by 225 feet north-south). Of these 51, or 39%, were positive, revealing that the site consisted of four distinct loci or areas, identified as "A" through "D". Artifacts were found confined to what appeared to be an Ap horizon of grayish brown (10YR5/2) fine sandy loam. Subsoil varied, but was often a yellowish-brown (10YR5/6) clay loam. In addition, two 1.5 foot units were also excavated, one in Area B and another in Area C. The Unit in Area B revealed relatively dense brick, mortar, and plaster debris, along with a high density of artifacts. Two possible features were encountered at the base of the unit. The Unit in Area C found a much lower density of remains, although the collection was dominated by Colono ware, a slave-made pottery from the eighteenth century.

The site was also found to contain several remnant dikes thought to be associated with rice cultivation. Representative of the process of hydraulic control used on eighteenth century interior swamp rice plantations, such dikes are common to the low country, although there has not been any detailed assessment of their research potential.

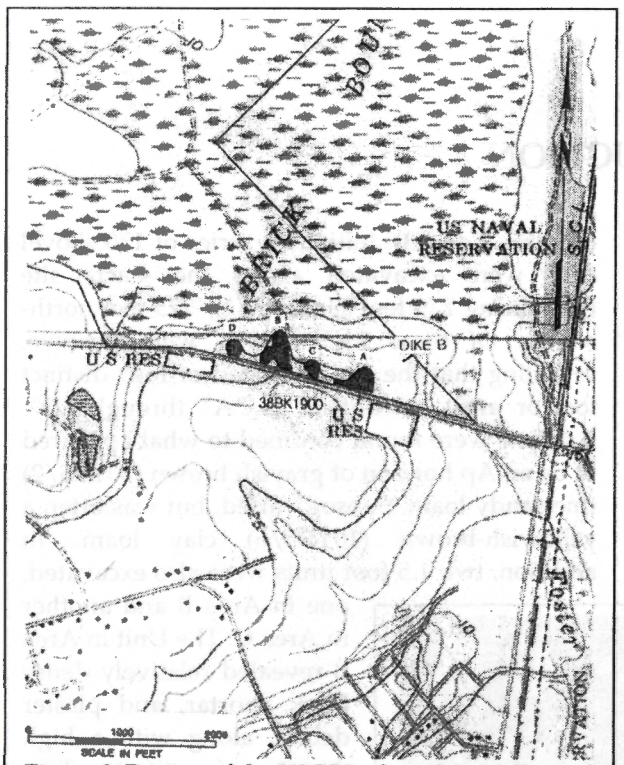

Figure 2. Portion of the USGS Ladson, Mt. Holly, and Kittredge topographic maps showing the location of 38BK1900.

The collections from the site were found to be dominated by Colono ware, coarse red earthenware, delft, and lead glazed slipware. The most recent ceramics were pearlwares, typically dating from the first quarter of the nineteenth century (although they can extend to almost mid-century). The mean ceramic date for the site, combining all shovel tests and units, was identified as 1747 (Trinkley et al. 2003:41).

The site was recommended eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SC SHPO) concurred. Centex Homes was unable to avoid or green space the site since it lays at the entrance to the development. As a result, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was prepared between Centex Homes, the SHPO, and the Office of Coastal Resource Management (OCRM). Also prepared was a data recovery plan that was reviewed and approved by the SHPO with modifications.

The archaeological investigations were conducted from late April through early May 2003. Sarah Fick, Michael Trinkley, and Debi Hacker conducted the historic research. The field investigations were conducted by Michael Trinkley, Nicole Southerland, and Tom Covington from April 22 through May 5, 2003.

The archaeological data recovery plan proposed the hand excavation of up to two 10-foot units (or 200 square feet) at each of the four identified areas (see Figure 3). These units would be placed using the information gathered from the initial shovel tests. At the conclusion of the hand excavations an unspecified series of mechanical cuts would be excavated in an effort to identify features that might exist in the study area, but which were not recovered by the hand excavation. As previously mentioned, however, the goal of the research at this site was not feature recovery – we had sufficient information concerning land use activities that we doubted features would be a major site contribution. Rather, we anticipated that the excavations would reveal artifacts suitable for better dating

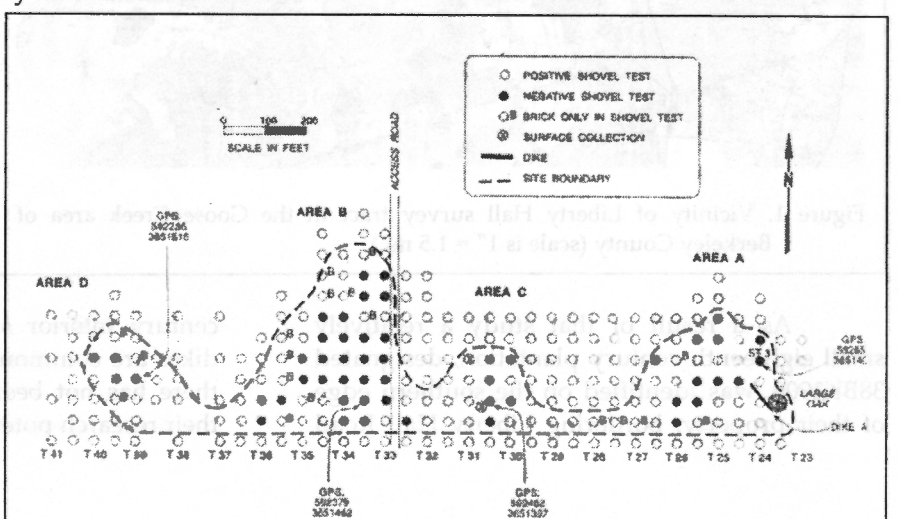

Figure 3. Shovel tests conducted at 38BK1900 during the initial survey.

and the identification of site functions. We hoped that our investigations would allow diachronic discussions of this particular plantation, or at least of this particular plantation area. Combined with the historic research we hoped that the investigations would allow us to better understand how a small, early eighteenth century rice plantation might have operated in the Goose Creek area (since the only other plantations available for comparison in the immediate area - Broom Hall and Crowfield -- are much larger and clearly higher status).

An adjunct of the archaeological research was to be the careful recordation through detailed topographic survey of two dikes identified within the boundaries of 38BK1900.

The historical research would involve two different activities. One was the conventional exploration of primary and secondary resources for information on the plantation owner, seeking to determine what light available historic documents might shed on the operation of this plantation and the families that owned it. The second activity, undertaken at the request of the SHPO, was the preparation of a context for eighteenth century rice plantations. The SHPO review correctly pointed out that while there is information readily available on nineteenth century rice plantations - most especially those plantations associated with tidal rice culture - there is remarkably little information on "other" types of rice plantations, how they operated, and how they fit into colonial South Carolina. This was not to be the exhaustive type of context intended to guide determinations of eligibility, but rather a starting point for future researchers.

A final component of our efforts was to be the creation of a curricula component. The goal of this work was to bring the results of the scholarly study into the classroom and make them more available to local citizens.

Each of these different activities will be briefly discussed in the following pages. This document represents a management summary and is intended only to allow the SHPO and OCRM to judge that the data recovery plan is being followed prior to allowing ground disturbing activities to commence on the development tract. A final report is still required for compliance with the MOA.

HISTORIC RESEARCH

The historic research for this project has been 95% completed. Resources at the South Carolina Historical Society, the South Carolina Huguenot Society, the Charleston County Register of Mesne Conveyance, and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History have been examined as part of this project. The title search completed for the initial survey has been refined (but not radically modified). The search for Mazyck documents has meet with only limited success - several family letters have been located. Although none specifically mention the Liberty Hall tract, they do provide information on the Mazyck's plantation activities and help us place the property in a clear family context. We have not been able to locate any plantation records nor have we found any factor's records pertaining to the Mazyck business tractions (neither the Pringle nor Laurens papers mention the Mazycks in any meaningful way, for example). Consequently, the financial dealings of the family are still rather poorly understood.

Nevertheless, the historic research has helped us better understand the acquisition of the property and its eventual distribution.

As much effort was devoted to the development of a context. A wide variety of both primary and secondary documents were examined to construct a coherent account of the development of rice cultivation during the late seventeenth through early nineteenth centuries. Our primary period of concern ranged up to the American Revolution (representing the primary occupation period of Liberty Hall, as well as the major period of upland swamp rice cultivation), although we did transition our study into the nineteenth century.

This context explores the nature of the rice, examining its composition and nutritional value; we examine the different types of cultivation, including upland (non-flooded, well-drained soils), rainfed lowland (rainfall dependent, bunded fields), flood-prone (fields flooded by rivers), and irrigated (puddled fields with water control); and we examine evidence of historic cultivation found today, noting that in the Wando, Cooper, Ashley area (including Goose Creek), it is estimated that 20,572 acres were at one time under rice cultivation. Our historical overview of rice cultivation begins with an analysis of the initial upland cultivation, explores the gradual transition to rainfed lowland and then to irrigated cultivation. While outside our immediate concerns, we also discuss the transition - and reasons involved in this transition - to tidal cultivation during the eighteenth century. We also provide discussions on the continuity of both upland and inland swamp cultivation, helping to explain why both "antiquated" techniques continued to be practiced into the late nineteenth century.

The context also examined the development of rice processing. While as detailed as possible, our research reveals that there is yet much to be done on this subject. While the details of mid- to late nineteenth century processing and milling are well understood, earlier processing activities have been poorly documented and remain poorly understood.

We also provide an introduction to the economics of rice production, focusing on the eighteenth century and explaining why rice became worthy of attention, as well as examining the return on the investment during the eighteenth century.

Finally, we briefly consider the impact of rice on eighteenth century African Americans. Perhaps the most controversial issue here is whether rice cultivation techniques came with the African American slaves or if these techniques were developed independently by the English in Carolina. We find the arguments of Wood (1974), Littlefield (1981), and most recently Carney (2001) unconvincing. Yet any scholarly discussion depends on additional research on planting techniques in Span, Portugal, and Italy – factors completely ignored by Wood, Littlefield, and Carney.

While our eighteenth century rice context advances no new theories, it does provide – as we believe a context should – a very detailed overview of the issues surrounding rice cultivation in South Carolina. We have also incorporated context issues, where appropriate, in our historic discussions pertinent to the Mazyck plantation at Liberty Hall.

DATA RECOVERY

Prior to any archaeological excavations, the property owner had the 4-acre site area bush hogged at our request. This opened the property up and allowed us not only better access than was possible during the survey, but the ability to evaluate topographic differences. We found, for example, that Area B was the highest and was clearly found occupying a well-defined ridge overlooking the rice swamp to the north. Topography also dropped down, albeit less severely, to the east (into areas C and A) and west (into Area D).

Recognizing Area B as the largest and most elevated ridge at the swamp edge helped explain why the largest concentration of seemingly higher status remains (for example, a larger proportion of European ceramics and plaster) were found in this one area.

Area D was found to be the lowest of the three areas, with Areas C and A intermediate between the high and low points of the plantation setting.

Excavations began in Area B where two 10-foot units were laid in to further explore the vicinity of Test Unit 1 – an area that had produced a high quantity of artifacts. All units were hand excavated with soils mechanically screened through ¼-inch mesh (a difficult feat considering the amount of rainfall and the clay soils). Units were cleaned and photographed at the base of the excavations. Both plan and profile drawings were also made at this time. Features were excavated by hand, with the fill screened through ¼-inch mesh. A sample of fill from each was retained for water flotation.

These units in Area B, designated 1 and 2, are shown in Figure 4. Artifact density was very high in Unit 1 and high (but lower) in Unit 2. We recovered a range of domestic artifacts, all from the mid- to late eighteenth century (based on field observations). Also recovered, primarily from Unit 1) was a relatively substantial amount of animal bone.

Although Unit 1 was clearly in the immediate vicinity of a structure (brick rubble from the unit, for example, weighed 400 pounds), the only feature (found in the southwest corner of the unit) was a shallow basin. Filled with mottled dark brown (7.5YR3/2) and brown (7.5YR5/3) sandy clay, the feature produced few artifacts and appears to be only a low spot that filled with minor amounts of yard trash. No architectural features were present. Unit two produced two features. Feature 2, in the northeast quadrant of the unit, was possibly a posthole or brick pier. While brick rubble was present, no in situ remains were identified. A more clearly defined posthole was found to the north of Feature 2.

Samples of soil from both features and the one posthole have been subjected to water flotation for the recovery of ethnobotanical remains. None of the features produced dark, organic soil, so it is not surprising that no substantive amounts of carbonized remains were recovered. The exceedingly small samples yielded only charred wood fragments.

Units 3 and 4, both 10-foot squares, were excavated in Area D. Given the low density of remains found in this area, these units were placed based on those shovel tests which produced materials. Artifact density in the units was low (consisting primarily of Colono ware) and the A horizon was found to a very dark gray (10YR3/1) loamy clay. No features were found in either unit.

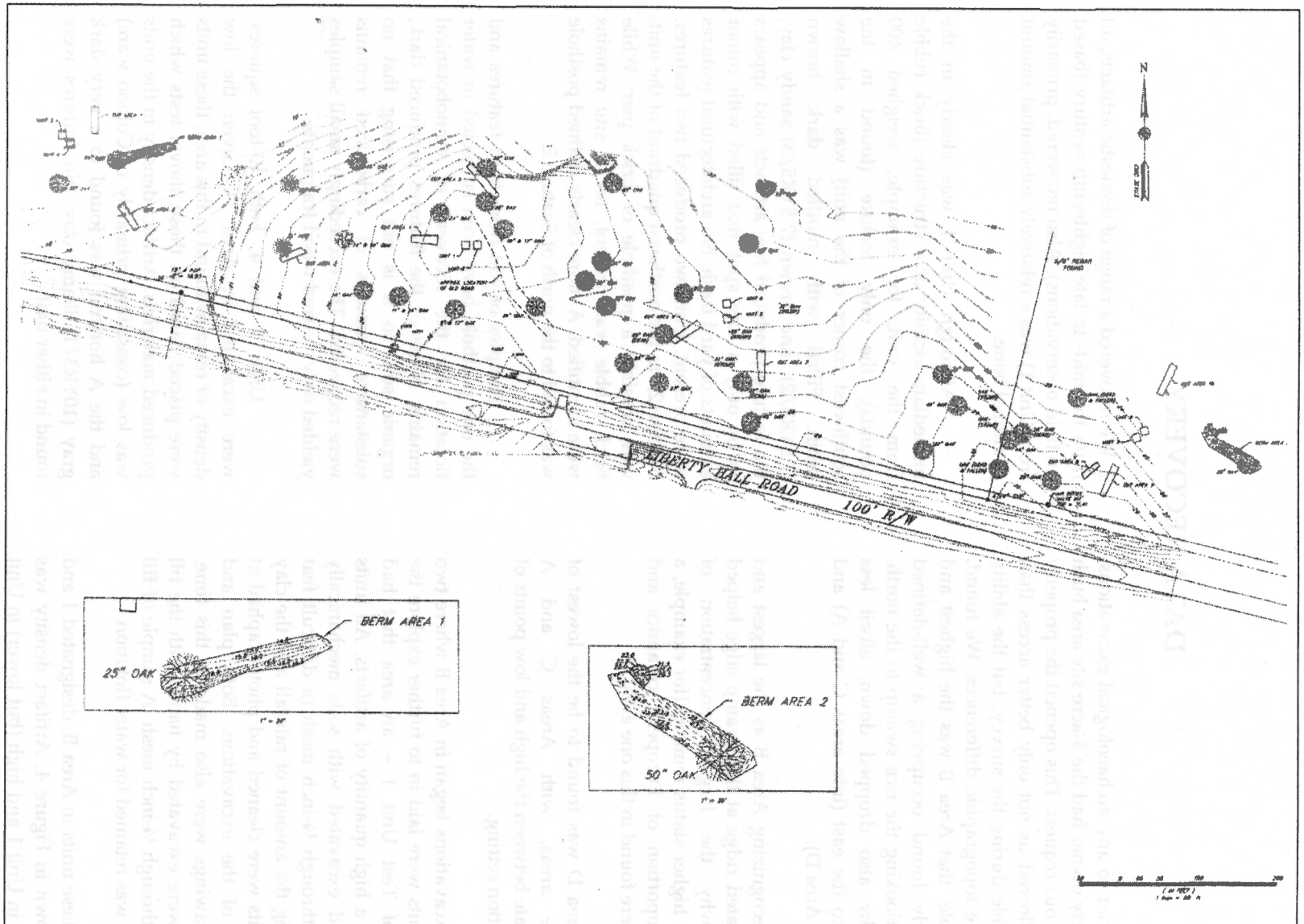

Figure 4. Plan showing the location of excavation units and mechanically stripped blocks at 38BK1900.

Units 5 and 6, both 10-foot squares, were placed in Area C, again centering them around the highest yielding shovel tests. Soils in this area are about as low and wet as found in Area D. Artifact content was low, as was the amount of brick recovered. No features were identified in either unit.

Units 7 and 8, again 10-foot squares, were placed in Area A . Here, also, we used the shovel test data to place the units in an area of relatively dense remains. Soils are higher and better drained than either Area C or D, but still the artifact content was low, no animal bone was recovered, and no features were found in the unit. Most noticeable was that the artifacts are primarily European, with a much higher percentage of early nineteenth century wares - suggesting that this loci represents a later occupation.

What is also noticeable is that brick is found throughout the four areas, albeit in variable amounts. We should note that brick is *not* consistently found throughout the site - just in those areas with relatively high artifact density. Given the presence of brick and the absence of features such as wall trench structures, it may be that all of the buildings on the site were elevated off the ground on brick piers.

At the conclusion of the hand excavations a tracked hoe with a cutting bar welded on the teeth of the bucket was brought in to mechanically strip portions of each site area. The goal of this work was to search for features. A tracked hoe was used since this equipment is large enough to easily remove the heavy, root-laden soils. The backhoe arm allows the equipment to remove the soil from the trench without entering the trench, and the cutting bar allows the floor to remain fairly level. This helps ensure that minimal cleanup is necessary to "read" the floor and determine if features are present. Shovel scraping was used as necessary to remove loose soil, obtain clean surfaces, and explore stains.

This work opened a series of 10 trenches in the four areas, totaling 3,150 square feet (555 square feet in Area A, 1040 square feet in Area B, 715 square feet in Area C, and 840 square feet in Area D). While we attempted to locate these trenches in areas of high probability (i.e., relatively well drained, level soils), we also sought to explore different site areas - opening trenches in portions of each site loci where hand excavations had not taken place. Units were also constrained by trees - while the equipment was large enough to easily remove trees up to a foot in diameter, this causes significant damage to the floor of the trench. We also sought to minimize tree removal since the property was to be developed for single family homes.

While a large number of tree stains and one modern feature - a fire lane cut - were identified, no historic features were encountered in any of the trenches.

At the conclusion of this work the location of the units and mechanically stripped blocks was mapped by Trico Engineering (see Figure 4). They also identified the location of all trees over ca. 10-inches (including dead trees and stumps) in the hope that it would help identify avenues. At the present time we have been able to find no discernable pattern. Also recorded on the map was a segment of a roadbed that is found on aerial photographs of the project tract dating to the 1940s and 1950s.

Trico has also mapped the two dikes that were identified on 38BK1900, although additional work is still being conducted to tie these dikes into the surrounding landscape. The larger of the two, situated at the eastern edge of the site, appears to have dammed the southern end of a drainage, creating rice fields immediately to the north - virtually at the site's edge. The function of the smaller dike, at the western edge of the site, is not so clear. We hope that as it is more completely mapped, a function can be determined.

CURRICULM WORK

The curriculum that has been proposed is *Who in the World is Benjamin Mazyck? The Mystery Man of Goose Creek.* Designed for 5th grade, integrating the history and archaeology of colonial Goose Creek, it is loosely modeled after the very popular *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego.* It will incorporate information on plantation life, slavery, religious persecution and emigration to America, and the types of crops grown on area plantations (most especially rice). Included in these topics will be the use of maps, wills, and written history. Other area plantations from the same time period (such as Crowfield and Broom Hall) will be incorporated.

The lesson plans will adhere to the S.C. social studies guidelines and will be designed to be used by all 5th grade teachers. Enrichment programs will be able to go into greater detail, depending on the time allotted to the program.

We are very fortunate to have enlisted the assistance and support of Dr. Michael Heitzler, a local historian and author (Heitzler 1983), principal of Westview Elementary School in Goose Creek, and the mayor of the Town of Goose Creek. Dr. Heitzler has not only provided historical information, but has assisted in reviewing the initial curriculum concept. We are also excited that the results of the excavation will be developed for inclusion on the Town's web site, providing yet additional public access.

The work on the curriculum plan is just getting underway. As a first step we have gathered pertinent historic documents, including some newspaper advertisements dealing with Benjamin Mazyck and his Goose Creek plantation, a letter written by Isaac Mazyck, Benjamin's father, in French (and translated by Sarah Fick), Benjamin's will, and plats of several plantations.

We have also examined other curriculum materials focused on rice, including Rice Romp for Teachers (www.riceromp.com), the Rice Plantation Lesson Plan from Winthrop University (http://coe.Winthrop.edu/tlc) , and When Rice Was King (www.cr.nps.gov/nr). None are directly comparable (the latter two focus exclusively on nineteenth century tidal rice and the first explores a broad range of social and science issues), but all offers some unique ideas that we hope to integrate into this curriculum. We have also explored several curriculum focused on wetlands as an adjunct to our efforts.

We are also working with several places where Carolina Gold Rice is today being planted, including Dr. Richard Schulze, Jr. who is growing rice on the Savannah, and Mr. Glenn Roberts at Anson Mills, who is growing rice at four different coastal South Carolina locations. These contacts are allowing us to obtain a variety of digital photographs of rice, samples of rough rice, stalks of rice, and samples of rice milled to the same condition that was typical of hand pounding during the colonial period. We are also working to obtain samples of the "red rice" or volunteer rice that was the bane of eighteenth and nineteenth century planters. Having these "hands-on" items will be of exceptional importance in developing a meaningful and exciting curriculum. We are also developing relationships that will allow teachers access to additional information.

CONCLUSIONS

This work has accomplished all of the in-field tasks outlined by the MOA, including the excavation of eight 10-foot units, the mechanical stripping of blocks at each of the four site areas, excavation of all features encountered, and water flotation of samples from all features. Beyond the MOA, we have also obtained good topographic mapping of the site area, including detailed mapping of the two rice banks present in the site area. We are currently waiting for the mapping that ties these dikes into the surrounding topography to be completed by Trico Engineering.

Many of the non-field tasks have also been completed. The historical study of the plantation is completed except for review of perhaps an additional dozen newspaper listings for Mazyck. The historical context is complete except for an final editing.

The curriculum preparation is the least far along, although we have collected considerable information and are further developing some of our concepts. Much of this work will need to wait for the analysis of the archaeological materials to be completed.

Laboratory processing of the collections has begun with approximately 50% of the collections washed and sorted (but not yet cataloged or analyzed). We will need to submit a substantial collection of faunal remains for analysis and hope to have that accomplished within the next month. The artifact analysis itself will take approximately two months, with the report preparation beginning in late summer.

We would like to curate these materials at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, although this is not finalized. For the past two years we have been periodically attempting to have that institution accept collections unsuccessfully. This has created a very large mass of collections that they seem unable to curate. We have also been unable to obtain any written response from that agency regarding their ability to curate materials. We are therefore looking at a variety of other options, including local curation with the Berkeley County Museum.

We believe that Centex Homes has complied with all aspects of the MOA up to this point and request that they receive permission to commence with ground disturbing activities, recognizing that a final report on these investigations remains their responsibility and is tied to the final permitting of the property.

SOURCES CITED

Carney, Judith

2001 *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Heitzler, Michael J.

1983 *Historic Goose Creek, South Carolina, 1670-1980.* Southern Historical Press, Easley, South Carolina.

Littlefield, Daniel C.

1981 *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina.* Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge.

Trinkley, Michael, Nicole Southerland, and Sarah Fick

2003 *Cultural Resources Survey of the Western Portion of the Liberty Hall Tract, Berkeley County, South Carolina.* Research Contribution 375. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.

Wood, Peter H.

1974 *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion.* Knopf, New York.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

HISTORIC RESEARCH

PRESERVATION

EDUCATION

INTERPRETATION

HERITAGE MARKETING

MUSEUM SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Chicora Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 8664 ▪ 861 Arbutus Drive
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-8664
Tel: 803/787-6910
Fax: 803/787-6910
Email: Chicora@bellsouth.net
www.chicora.org